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The Old Cotton Gin

John Trotwood Moore

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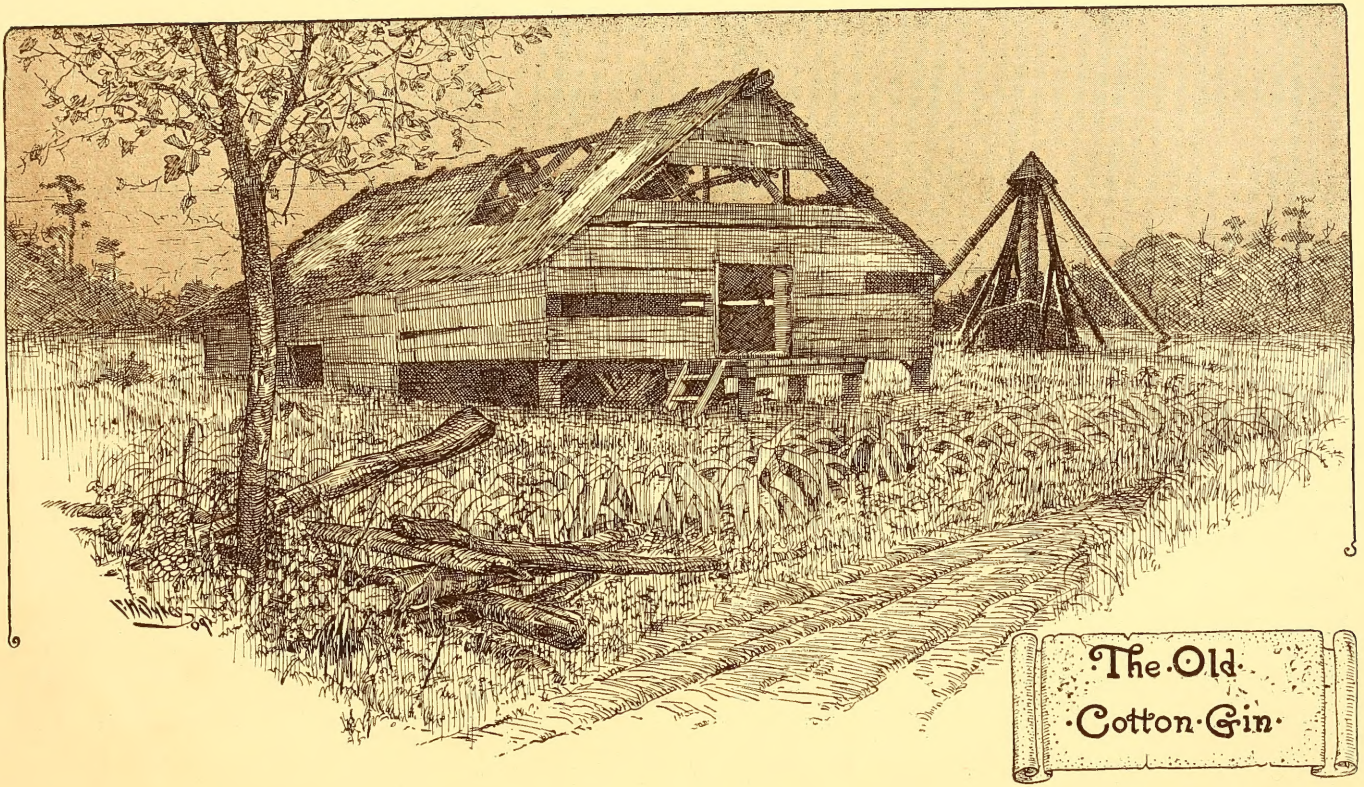


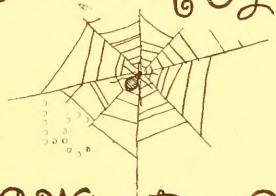
The Old Cotton Gin

The Old Cotton-Gin

by

John Trotwood Moore

Drawings by
Charles H. Sykes



The John C. Winston Company
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List of Full-page Illustrations

The Old Cotton Gin. Frontispiece

"And the lizard is ginner.

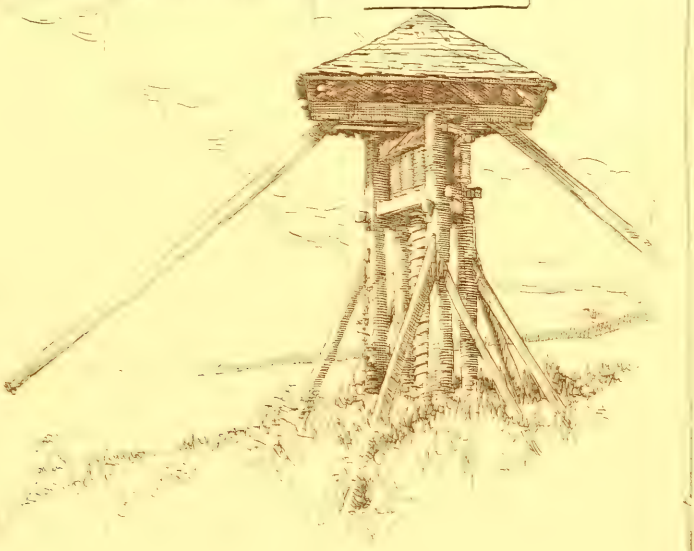
"For the old old South."

"Free-song and slave-song would mingle and flow."

"For Death was the ginner."

"And conquered by toil."

"And a New South was ginner."

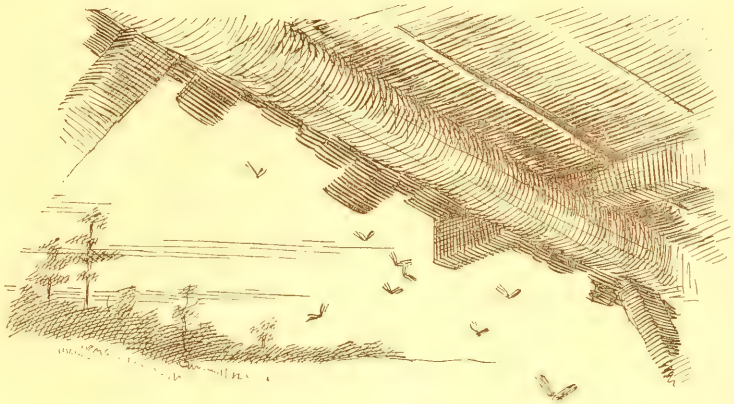


In
Very tender recollection
of
The old Plantation,
near
Marion, Alabama,
Home of Rebecca Moore
Isabella Townsend.

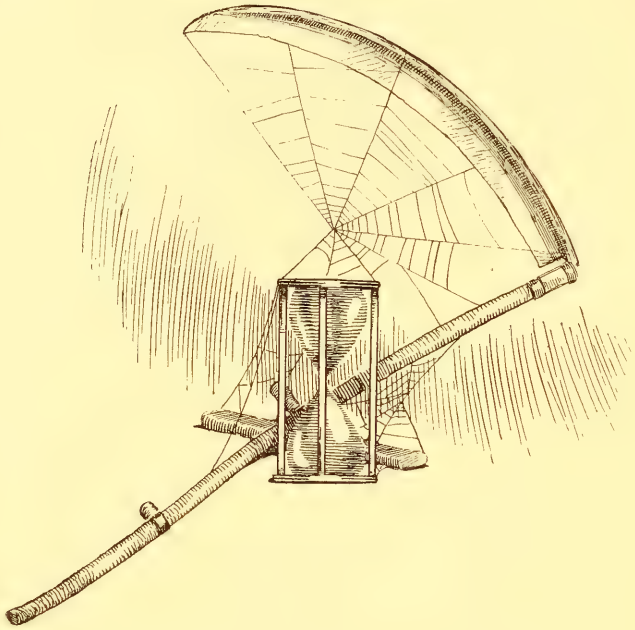
The Old Cotton Gin

It lies alone where the old road leads
Through the lush young corn and the wayside weeds

The June wind sings
a song in its throat
The June clouds lovingly
over it float



And through its
skeleton ribs of steel
The moth-flies dance
in a drowsy reel



For its saws are crust
With canker and rust
Their song is the silence
of lips in dust

And the lizard is ginner
And out and in
The spider is spinner
At the Old Cotton Gin

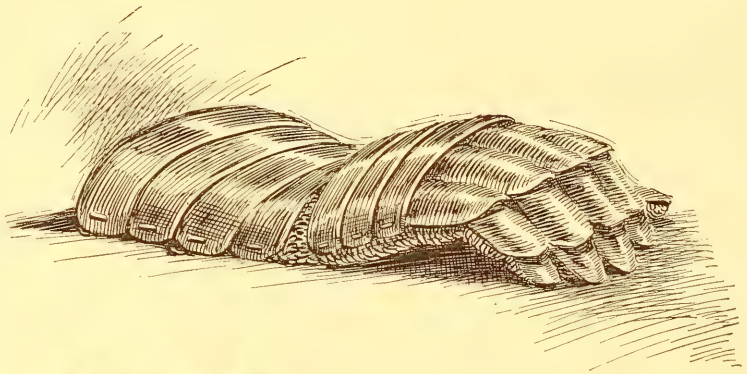
And the lizard is ginner

Aye many a day for
the old old South
He loosed his lint from
a fiery mouth

Girdling the earth and
its vnclothed bars
Like the fleece-lined path
through the golden stars

And he stood in his strength
this fallen thing
A hoary monarch
an unCrowned king.

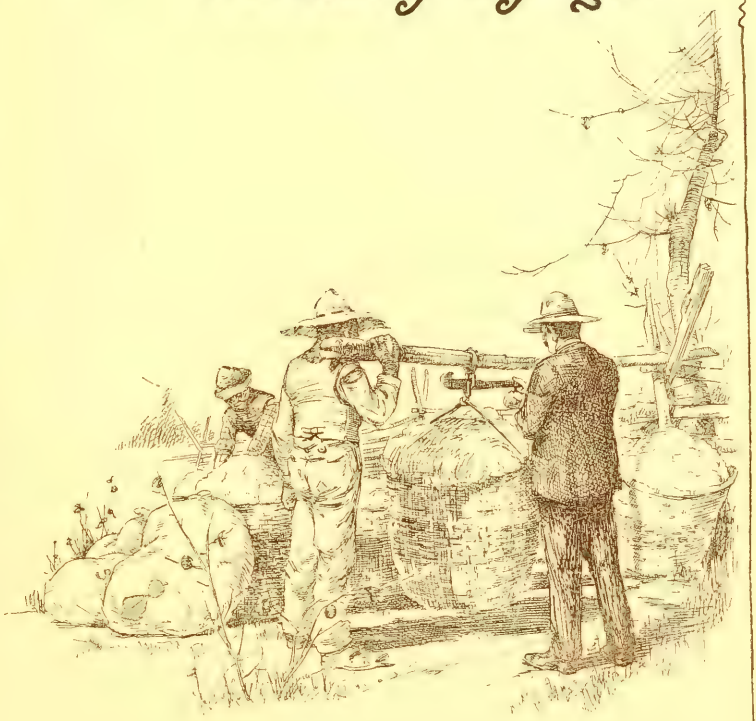
And over the land
With an iron hand
He flung his wealth
with a gesture grand



And Might was the ginner
Of barn and of bin
There was never a winner
Like the Old Cotton Gin

For the
old old South

Broad was the kingdom
he ruled in his might
Brave were the armies
he rallied for right



Bright were the wings
of his ships on the seas
Bold were his merchantmen
kingly his ease

True were his women
in hut or in hall
So't was the sunshine
that fell over all

From banjo and bow
And the long cotton row
Free-song and slave-song
would mingle and flow

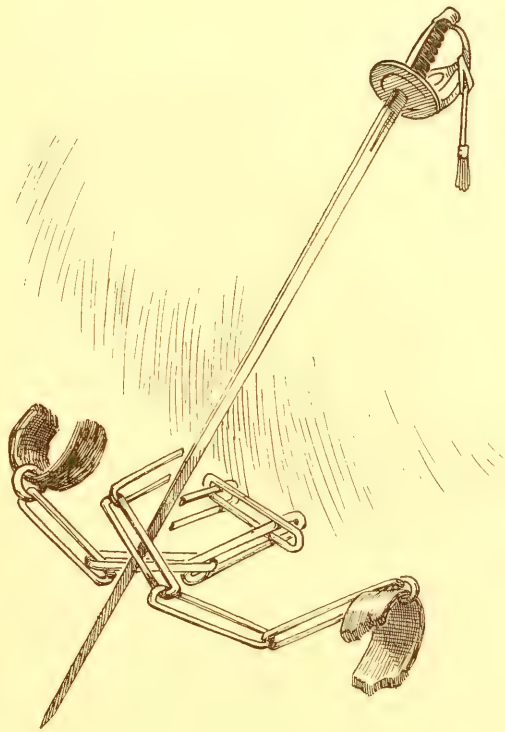
And Pride was the sinner
(Unpardonable sin)
Was there ever a sinner
Like the Old Cotton Gin?

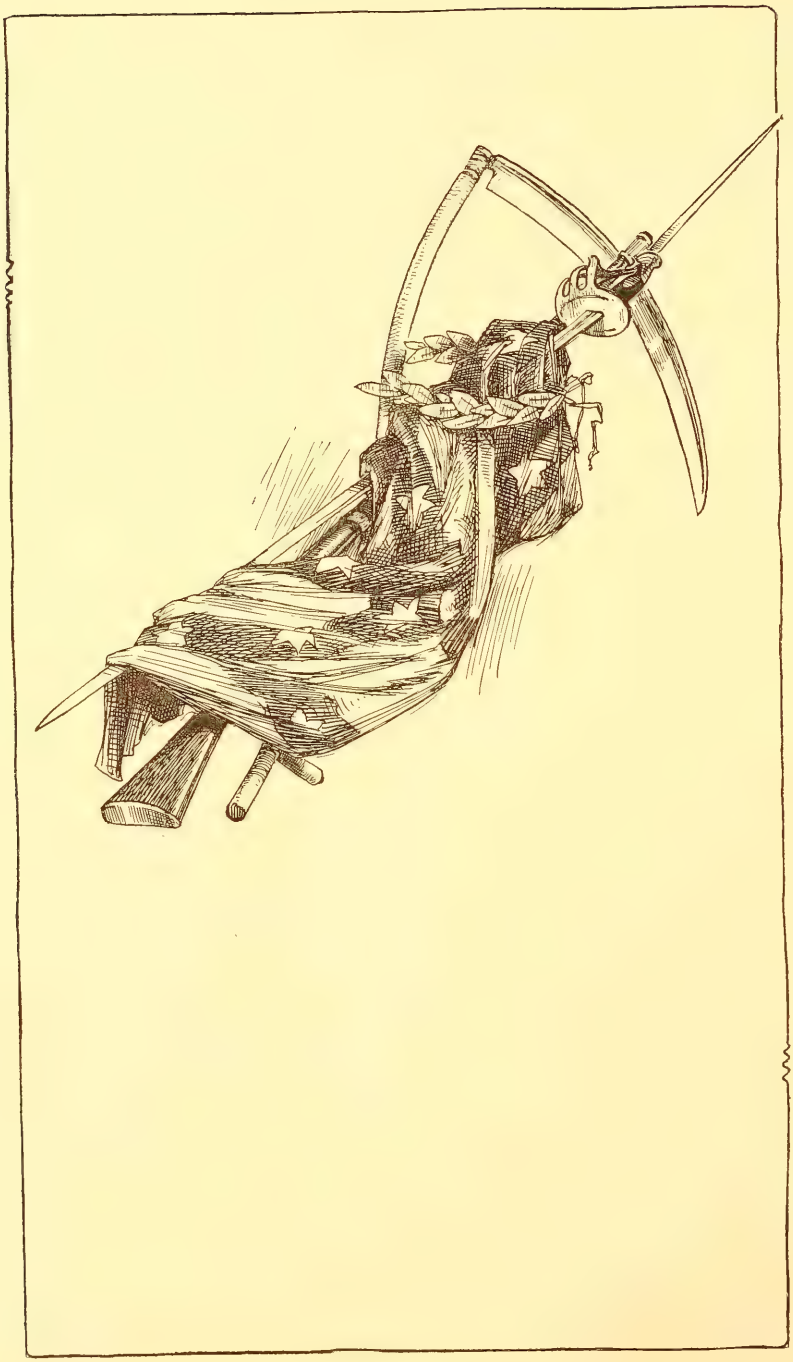
Free-song-and-
-slave-song-would-
-mingle-and-flow-

Alas for his weavings
aye tears for the day
When out from his loom
came the jackets of gray

And the locks that were plucked
in despair from his head
Were woven to crimson
in shrouds for his dead

They died for the Sin-
the centuries had given
And their blood is the pledge
on the lintels of heaven





By river and plain
They march not again
And wet was his fleece
With the blood of his slain

For Death was the spinner
And Riot and Din
And Sorrow the spinner
At the Old Cotton Gin.

For·Death·
·was·the·
·ginner·

He buried his dead
and a tenderer tone
Crept into his song
for he sang it alone

But he wove as he sang
and the pattern was bright
The tapestry of stars
that come with the night

And he built his waste places
and conquered by toil
And garnered in peace
what was squandered in spoil

And all the day long
He wove in his song
The patience of right
In the pillage of wrong

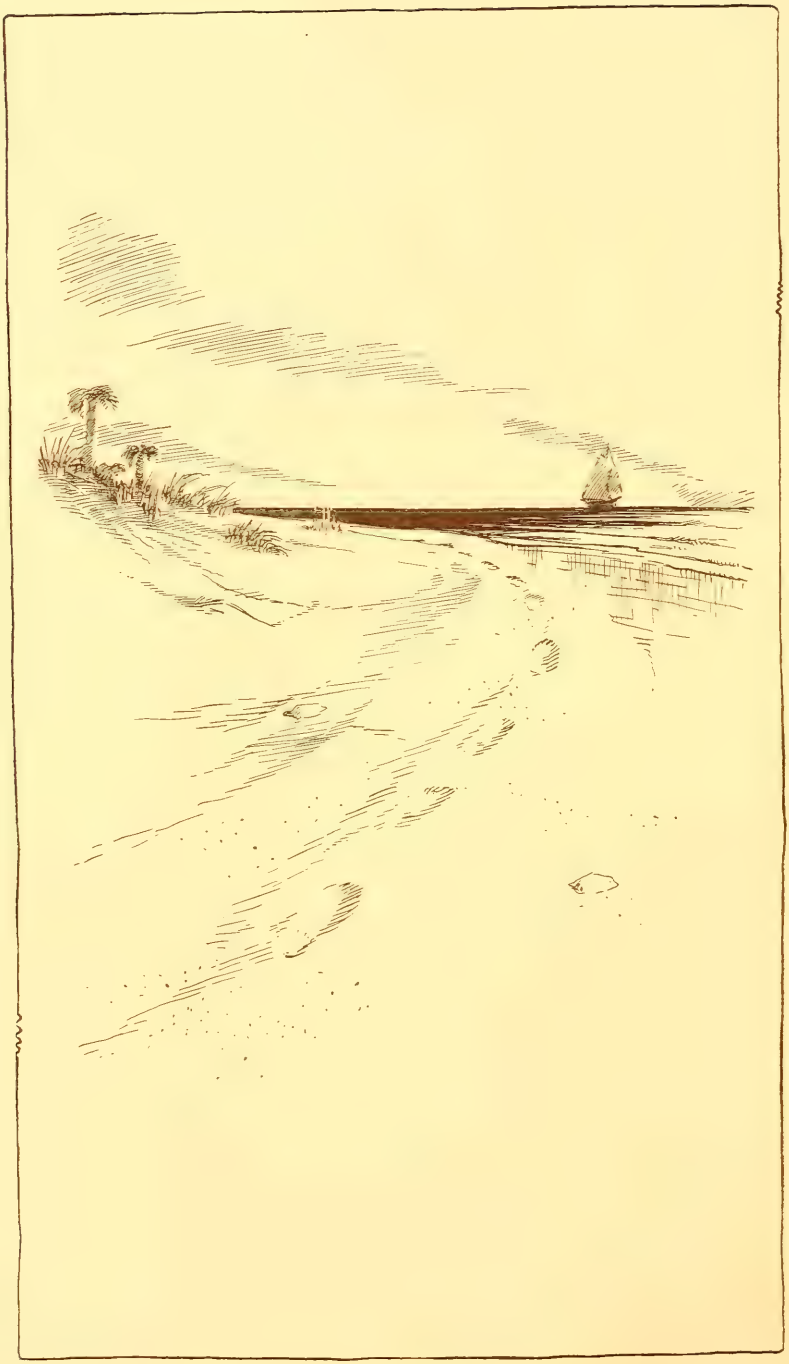
And·Faith·was·the·ginner·
The·fabric·to·spin·
And·Hope·was·the·spinner·
At·the·Old·Cotton·Gin·

And conqvered
by toil

His hope in the future
his heart in the past.
He worked for his people
and loomed to the last.

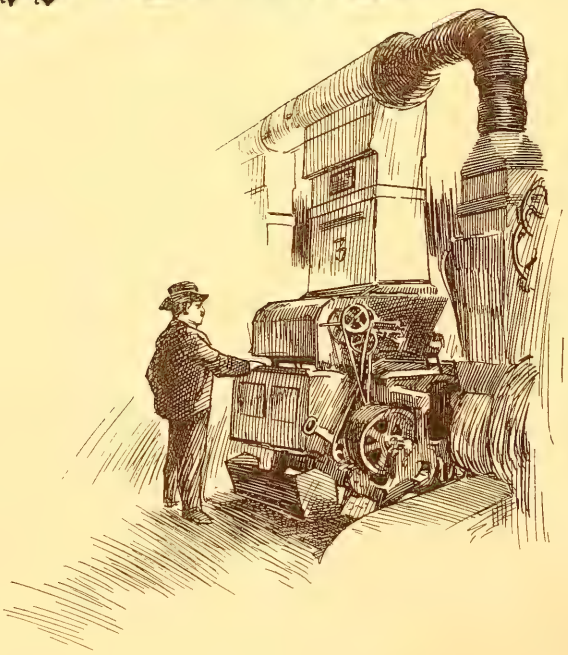
And tottering he stood
through the rift and the reel
And died as he lived
with his hand on the wheel

And sighing his soul
passed peacefully through
As pure as the last look
of flint in the five



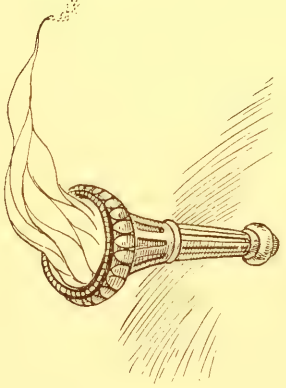
But the heart whose beat
Was the Century's feet
Stopped not to Death
nor died in defeat

And a New South was ginner.
A New Age was in.
A New Century spinner.
A New Cotton Gin.



And a New South was ginner

Rear·him·O·sons·
·of·a·generous·sire·
Alyft·on·a·monvment·
·not·on·a·pyre·



Base-stone·of·valor·

·colvmn·of·youth·

Shaft-stone·of·chivalry·

·cap-stone·of·truth·

Honor him
sons of a land that is fair
Let him not lie in
the rank weeds there

For see.. From his night·
He rises all bright·
He wakens.. He wakens..
·a new loom of light·

With Fame for his ginner
His kith and his kin
And the world is the winner
In the Old Cotton Gin
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